

*“I don’t want something special.
I want something beautifully plain.”*
~ Anne Lamott

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This is why poor people’s bad decisions make perfect sense

BY LINDA TIRADO

There’s no way to structure this coherently. They are random observations that might help explain the mental processes. But often, I think that we look at the academic problems of poverty and have no idea of the why. We know the what and the how, and we can see systemic problems, but it’s rare to have a poor person actually explain it on their own behalf. So this is me doing that, sort of.

Rest is a luxury for the rich. I get up at 6:00 AM, go to school (I have a full course load, but I only have to go to two in-person classes) then work, then I get the kids, then I pick up my husband, then I have half an hour to change and go to Job 2. I get home from that at around 12:30AM, then I have the rest of my classes and work to tend to. I’m in bed by 3:00

AM. This isn’t every day, I have two days off a week from each of my obligations. I use that time to clean the house and soothe Mr. Martini and see the kids for longer than an hour and catch up on schoolwork. Those nights I’m in bed by midnight, but if I go to bed too early I won’t be able to stay up the other nights because I’ll mess my pattern up, and I drive an hour home from Job 2 so I can’t afford to be sleepy. I never get a day off from work unless I am fairly sick. It doesn’t leave you much room to think about what you are doing, only to attend to the next thing and the next. Planning isn’t in the mix.

When I got pregnant the first time, I was living in a weekly motel. I had a mini fridge with no freezer and a microwave. I was on WIC. I ate peanut butter from the jar and frozen burritos because they were 12/\$2. Had I had a stove, I couldn’t have



Linda Tirado

made beef burritos that cheaply. And I needed the meat, I was pregnant. I might not have had any prenatal care, but I am intelligent enough to eat protein and iron whilst knocked up.

I know how to cook. I had to take Home Ec to graduate high school. Most people on my level didn’t. Broccoli is intimidating. You have to have a working stove, and pots, and spices, and you’ll have to do the dishes no matter

how tired you are or they’ll attract bugs. It is a huge new skill for a lot of people. That’s not great, but it’s true. And if you mess it up, you could make your family sick. We have learned not to try too hard to be middle-class. It never works out well and always makes you feel worse for having tried and failed yet again. Better not to try. It makes more

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Are you being tracked?

BY MICHAEL NIEMANN

It’s Tuesday morning seven am, you get into your car and drive to work. Or it’s Saturday afternoon 2 pm and you drive to the grocery store. Those and any of the other trips you take are perfectly ordinary trips. There’s nothing special about them. You probably forget most of them.

But your local police department might not if it’s one of the increasing number of departments across Oregon that employ automatic license plate readers.

According to Becky Strauss, Legislative Director of the ACLU Oregon, the Portland PD, the Salem PDs and Clackamas County use automatic license plate readers. And here in the Rogue Valley, they are used by the Medford Police Department.

Automatic license plate readers are supposed to make life easier for the police officers on their beat. It’s a much faster way to run a license plate and find out if a car is stolen or on a hot list for another reason. But the indiscriminate collection of license plates, time and location from unwitting drivers also raises important privacy questions.

What is an automatic license plate reader?

An automatic license plate reader is a two part affair. The first part is a high speed camera either mounted at a fixed location or on a police cruiser. The camera takes photographs of cars. Depending on the time of day, it takes pictures using either color or infrared technology. A model advertised by Motorola1 takes three pictures and automatically selects the clearest image. It also continuously searches its viewfinder of license plates.

Finally, these cameras are truly high speed cameras. According to the Medford Mail Tribune, the system used by the Medford PD can capture thirty plates a second. Others are even faster.

The picture is processed by the software inside the police cruiser. It identifies the license plate within the picture and converts that image to machine readable text. The system then checks the number extracted from the photograph against a database or manually entered plate numbers. If there is a hit, the officer in the cruiser is alerted.

Back at the station, all the information gathered during the patrol is downloaded to the station server. The Motorola system is ominously called BOSS, Back Office System server. BOSS stores date, time, GPS location, street address



Photo courtesy Medford PD.

and, of course, the license plate. The most important feature of BOSS, according to the Motorola sales brochure is “its data mining capability, which allows customers to map hits based on a wide range of criteria.

Motorola advertises its system as helping police departments to: combat auto theft, collect revenue from ticket scofflaws, gather intelligence and analyze crime patterns; monitor felons and other persons of interest; reduce claims of profiling (presumably because the officer takes a picture rather than stopping a car) establish perimeter security around sensitive areas;

In light of these promises, it’s not surprising that PD are eager to employ that technology. A 2012 country-wide survey of

the Police Executive Research Forum2 found that 71 percent of agencies polled use ALPRs, 85 percent plan on adopting or expanding APLR use over the next five years and that by 2017, on average, 25 percent of the squad cars will have such readers installed.

As I pointed out earlier, only the Medford Police Department employs ALPRs in our valley. Ashland, Talent and Phoenix departments do not use them. One reason may be cost. Talent Police Chief Mike Moran remarked that “these systems aren’t cheap.”

Most department acquire APLRs through grants give by the federal Department of Homeland Security. The generosity of the federal government is driven by its desire to create a seamless country-wide database for use of law enforcement in its fight against terrorism and other crime. The creation of regional fusion centers, two of which are located in Oregon, is testimony to that goal.

The vast capabilities of these new technologies have civil liberty advocates worried and for good reason. ALPRs are but one example of how technology is used to accumulate vast

TRACKING, 10

Food desert grows as local groceries close

BY JASON HOUK

The region’s largest independent grocery chain will close stores in the Rogue Valley.

Brookings-based C&K Market Inc., has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and said it will shutter about a third of its stores in Oregon and California. The company cited “the expansion of large discount stores, such as Costco and Walmart” as the reason for the filing. Among those to be sold or closed are two stores in Jackson County and three more in Josephine County.

The move will further exacerbate growing food insecurity in the Rogue Valley. According to the USDA, nearly 9,000 people in Jackson County live in a “food desert”, mostly low-income areas with no access to healthy food within a mile radius. The USDA identifies food deserts, as “areas where people have limited access to a variety of healthy and affordable food.”

According to 2010 statistics published by Feeding America, 16.9% of the Jackson County community is food insecure. Among Jackson County residents surveyed about their access to food, over half listed lack of transportation or distance from food sources as factors that affect their food security. In some rural communities, residents report driving over 30 miles to obtain groceries. Those who do not have access to a car find it virtually impossible to reach stores beyond their immediate neighborhood and must rely on friends, neighbors, and food pantries for meals.

The Shop Smart on Crater Lake Highway in White City is also on the list to be closed, The USDA Food Desert Locator identifies 2140 people in White City with limited access to food. This closure will only increase this number.

For the residents of Grants Pass, all of the major grocery stores are located in one single geographic area, the Parkway. With the closing of Ray’s Food Place stores on Seventh Street and Williams Highway there will be no grocery store that is even remotely convenient in the Northwest part of town.

Among the stores scheduled to be closed is Ray’s Food Place in Phoenix. With the closure,

DESERT, 9

Editorials & Opinion

Dear readers

Letter from the Publisher

As 2013 is coming to a close, the future of independent media in the Rogue Valley looks bright. The Rogue Valley Community Press, (formally Ashland Free Press), celebrates our second year publishing independent news in the Rogue Valley. In 2014 we look forward to continuing to publish the Rogue Valley Community Press. We hope that community members, artists, students, activists, writers and photographers continue to send us your content. Your submissions and support help keep this newspaper publication

relevant and timely. Did you know that ten mega corporations control almost everything we buy? It's not just the products we buy and consume either. In recent decades, the very news and information that we get has been bundled together: 90% of the media is now controlled by just six companies, down from 50 in 1983, according to a Frugal Dad infographic from last year. But we do not have to accept this. Over the past 12 months we have experimented with several different models for sustainability and have concluded that our strongest support comes from our readers and our strong social justice community. We look forward to becoming a non-profit organization in 2014. We deeply appreciate the financial support and words of encouragement you've given us. Watch for a big fundraising party and concert in January with Occupy Medford and friends to support this paper for the upcoming year. And you can financially support this paper by sending your donations to: RVCP, 258 A Street, Ashland Oregon. or via Paypal to jason@kskq.org.

Thank you to Ashland Fire Department

Thank you Ashland Fire Department for your quick response to a two alarm fire on Halloween night. A 1910 Victorian home, located at 155 5th Street was destroyed, but fire crews were able to keep the fire contained so that no other homes in the vicinity were harmed. Their professionalism was appreciated by all who reside in that neighborhood. And finally, thank you to Ashland Police Department for keeping watch in the days after the fire.



Ashland F.D. in action. Photo by Jason Houk

Theatre views

A PROFILE BY HUGH GARRETT

There is only one "J.P." He is an infamous Oregon Shakespeare Festival actor and local character much loved in the community both on and off stage. JP (Josiah Phillips) is also one of the long time performers who has made OSF the great theatre it is today. A formidable actor, he is also a mesmerizing reader, and comic. His voice bespeaks pure truth from a deep source, and all fortunate enough to know him would agree he is a rascal of the best fortune. JP has a rare humanity that is unassuming, compassionate, generous, and big on simple truths. He is one of the essential elements needed in keeping Ashland a real town.

Hopefully there will be more of his performances and readings here. He brings the "hallowed" back to verse, poetry, and prose. JP performed many of the best plays of August Wilson, and Fugard around the black experience in America and South Africa.

JP's experience qualifies him to breath life into a character as few others. This is something young black actors miss, this knowledge of a time so different for blacks and still the same, just a generation ago. History is accomplished by Phillips better than book, film or documentary.

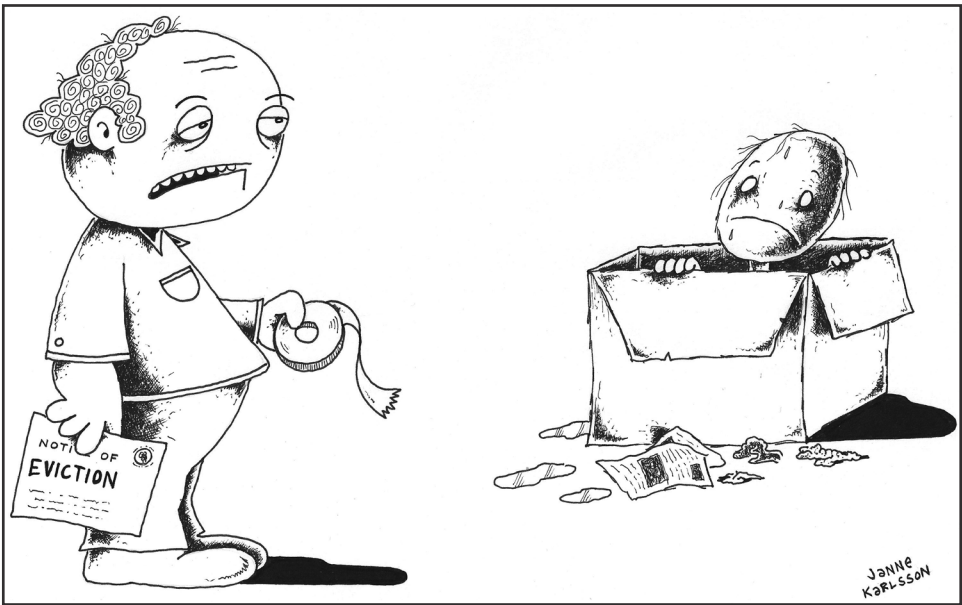
School children, having no idea of historic, but still present black life, finally experience it as it is. With JP in a history or period piece there is nothing stylized about it. The performance is always about then and now at the same time. August Wilson's plays require a Josiah Phillips if one can be found. JP knows the pace, feel, and dimension of America life as few others do.

Though JP has towered in the traditional classic roles of Shakespeare, his Hollaway in Two Trains Running set another standard of being there. In his smaller roles with fewer lines

his JP sets the tone and feel of the action. His Nesbitt in The Liquid Plain finally bespoke the meandering theme. JP is a man of mischief, quick laughs, large barbeque, and a silent depth that finds release in words of any kind. Quiet and unassuming, always ready for a joke, experience has melded a voice of gold for all to take what they please. This makes JP a necessity in any theatre company. His roles and awards are too numerous to list here, whether Prospero, or the Porter in Macbeth, Sancho Panza in Don Quixote or Snout in Midsummer Night's Dream. In large roles or small, JP is the actor totally in the action of the scene, and as he believes what is happening onstage is real, so do we. Teaching, educating, enchanting the audience is his gift and we hope to see and hear a one-man show and many readings from JP to come. Phillips is a profit for the indefinable belief in Spirit by voice. Come back for readings and more theatre JP. Your fans and friends demand it.

Netflix Theatre Tip: There are no movies like movies about the making of theatre in all of its crazy, egotistic, petty, fabulous glory. A great movie about theatre is Cradle Will Rock. This is the "mostly true" story of Orson Well's first Broadway production for the WPA in the early thirties. The film is a re-enactment of one of the foremost theatre stories of Broadway. It is a masterwork of the cultural and political Depression years, and full of portraits of a few of the giant personalities of the time, including Diego Rivera.

Hugh Garrett is a theatre journalist and can be reached through this paper.



Street Life

Artwork by Janne Karlsson www.svenskapache.se

Your Social Justice News Resource

The Rogue Valley Community Press (RVCP) is a publication for the working class and a platform for marginalized voices in our community. Through RVCP, we aim to educate people about social justice issues and inspire them to create positive change. Published monthly, RVCP is available through subscription, local retail locations, and street vendors.

Contributions from the community are welcome, including articles, letters to the editor, short poetry, and photography. Send submissions to editor@rvcommunitypress.com. All writing accepted for publication will be edited with due respect for the author's intent. Opinions expressed in RVCP are those of the authors, and not necessarily the editors.

RVCP is a proud member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA). Contributions to RVCP may be reprinted in other NASNA member publications.

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Contact

Rogue Valley Community Press
258 A Street #1
Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 622-9483

editor@rvcommunitypress.com
advertising@rvcommunitypress.com

Staff

Jason Houk
Publisher

Vanessa Houk
Editor-in-Chief

FIND US AT RVCOMMUNITYPRESS.COM AND ON FACEBOOK

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Carving a legacy

BY VANESSA HOUK

For some folks, surviving a plane crash would be fodder for thousands of conversations and something they might randomly mention, just because they can. In today’s up to the second, media saturated life, it would quickly be a Facebook update, a tweet or an Instagram. For my own Uncle Bill, a far quieter man, it was something that his extended family only recently learned about, six decades after the fact. And then, even still his words about it were few and far between.

The crash happened at twilight, shortly after the plane took off from an Air Force Base in Northern California.

He talked about how he felt as he walked away from that crash, lucky to be unharmed and how he looked back at the plane and saw that the landing gear was smashed.

Lucky indeed. As all of us would later be for having him in our lives.

In 1958 he would bring a young Japanese woman into our family as he wed my Aunt Aiko. Together they would build a life full of love, laughter, family and friends.

I can’t think about Uncle Bill this time of year without remembering epic Thanksgiving gatherings where 20 or more family members would converge in Aiko and Bill’s ranch style home and crowd around the table, a ball game on the television in the background and hear the clinking of silverware on china plates over the din of conversations. Add a dog looking through the glass door, his eyes following my uncle’s every move and in a nutshell you know all you need to know about him. He is a stable force.

That old house was a backdrop of my childhood and often I would go for an extended

visit. With four older siblings it was rare for me to find quiet places, but that’s what I remember most about their home. It was calm and safe and I liked watching the chickens in the backyard as much as I liked collecting dandelions and clovers from the grass.

He’d probably deny it if you asked him, but Bill is also an artist who can take a piece of rough wood in his hand and turn it over again and again until he sees what it should become. A fish, an intricate bird; hundreds of creatures have come to life underneath his careful gaze and steady carving hand. A whole menagerie line the shelves in their living room as quietly and steadily as the years have passed.

We don’t get to visit as often as we’d like to. The last time we saw my aunt and uncle, we sat around their living room and recalled summers filled with camping trips which were often just excuses to go fishing. We reflected on how that same gigantic family crowded around a campfire, filling the woods with noise. Their lives are much quieter now, but he told me that their yard is full of birds who fill their neighborhood with songs and how he likes to sit and watch them through the glass door. There’s a dog who is often on the other side of the glass, his eyes following my uncle, just like old times.

Nowadays he turns over memories again and again in his mind, as he’s carved a life that’s just as exquisite as his wooden creatures. While reflecting, he focuses on the small things that matter most. Family, dogs, fishing.

I like to think that now as he looks back at the years, just as he looked back at that plane all those years ago, one word comes to mind. Lucky.

Human Rights Day 2013

Human Rights Day will be celebrated on the campus of Southern Oregon University Tuesday, December 10, 2013. The program in the Stevenson Union’s Rogue River Room includes first a panel presentation 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. focused on two themes, International Trade Agreements and Universal Health Care. The SOU student United Nations Club is the campus host working in coalition with Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice the community host. The panel will be followed by a concert at 5:00 p.m. with musician David Rovics singing “songs of international solidarity.”

Decisions

CONTINUED FROM 1

sense to get food that you know will be palatable and cheap and that keeps well. Junk food is a pleasure that we are allowed to have; why would we give that up? We have very few of them.

The closest Planned Parenthood to me is three hours. That’s a lot of money in gas. Lots of women can’t afford that, and even if you live near one you probably don’t want to be seen coming in and out in a lot of areas. We’re aware that we are not “having kids,” we’re “breeding.” We have kids for much the same reasons that I imagine rich people do. Urge to propagate and all. Nobody likes poor people procreating, but they judge abortion even harder.

Convenience food is just that. And we are not allowed many conveniences. Especially since the Patriot Act passed, it’s hard to get a bank account. But without one, you spend a lot of time figuring out where to cash a check and get money orders to pay bills. Most motels now have a no-credit-card-no-room policy. I wandered around SF for five hours in the rain once with nearly a thousand dollars on me and could not rent a room even if I gave them a \$500 cash deposit and surrendered my cell phone to the desk to hold as surety.

Nobody gives enough thought to depression. You have to understand that we know that we will never not feel tired. We will never feel hopeful. We will never get a vacation. Ever. We know that the very act of being poor guarantees that we will never not be poor. It doesn’t give us much reason to improve ourselves. We don’t apply for jobs because we know we can’t afford to look nice enough to hold them. I would make a super legal secretary, but I’ve been turned down more than once because I “don’t fit the image of the firm,” which is a nice way of saying “gtfo, pov.” I am good enough to cook the food, hidden away in the kitchen, but

Panel Presentation
3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Welcome from SOU’s United Nations’ Club and Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice to Human Rights Day, an overview presented by SOU Professor Jim Phillips
International Trade presented by Elizabeth Swager, Director Oregon Fair Trade Campaign
Universal Health Care presented by Dr. Mike Huntington, Physicians for a National Health Plan, and Mark Kellenbeck, Chair of Health Care for All Oregon--Rogue Valley

Free Concert
with David Rovics
5 p.m.

David Rovics is an American singer/songwriter who lives in Portland, Oregon. His music concerns social justice issues. Rovics is critical of the United States government’s policies and claims that the “U.S. government’s foreign policy represents U.S. corporate interests and that “the U.S. government does not like democracy either at home or abroad.” David Rovic’s concert at Southern Oregon University will focus on “songs of international solidarity.”

my boss won’t make me a server because I don’t “fit the corporate image.” I am not beautiful. I have missing teeth and skin that looks like it will when you live on B12 and coffee and nicotine and no sleep. Beauty is a thing you get when you can afford it, and that’s how you get the job that you need in order to be beautiful. There isn’t much point trying.

Cooking attracts roaches. Nobody realizes that. I’ve spent a lot of hours impaling roach bodies and leaving them out on toothpick pikes to discourage others from entering. It doesn’t work, but is amusing.

“Free” only exists for rich people. It’s great that there’s a bowl of condoms at my school, but most poor people will never set foot on a college campus. We don’t belong there. There’s a clinic? Great! There’s still a copay. We’re not going. Besides, all they’ll tell you at the clinic is that you need to see a specialist, which seriously? Might as well be located on Mars for how accessible it is. “Low-cost” and “sliding scale” sounds like “money you have to spend” to me, and they can’t actually help you anyway.

I smoke. It’s expensive. It’s also the best option. You see, I am always, always exhausted. It’s a stimulant. When I am too tired to walk one more step, I can smoke and go for another hour. When I am enraged and beaten down and incapable of accomplishing one more thing, I can smoke and I feel a little better, just for a minute. It is the only relaxation I am allowed. It is not a good decision, but it is the only one that I have access to. It is the only thing I have found that keeps me from collapsing or exploding.

I make a lot of poor financial decisions. None of them matter, in the long term. I will never not be poor, so what does it matter if I don’t pay a thing and a half this week instead of just one thing? It’s not like the sacrifice will result in improved circumstances; the thing holding me back isn’t that I blow five bucks at Wendy’s. It’s that now that I have proven

that I am a Poor Person that is all that I am or ever will be. It is not worth it to me to live a bleak life devoid of small pleasures so that one day I can make a single large purchase. I will never have large pleasures to hold on to. There’s a certain pull to live what bits of life you can while there’s money in your pocket, because no matter how responsible you are you will be broke in three days anyway. When you never have enough money it ceases to have meaning. I imagine having a lot of it is the same thing.

Poverty is bleak and cuts off your long-term brain. It’s why you see people with four different babydaddies instead of one. You grab a bit of connection wherever you can to survive. You have no idea how strong the pull to feel worthwhile is. It’s more basic than food. You go to these people who make you feel lovely for an hour that one time, and that’s all you get. You’re probably not compatible with them for anything long-term, but right this minute they can make you feel powerful and valuable. It does not matter what will happen in a month. Whatever happens in a month is probably going to be just about as indifferent as whatever happened today or last week. None of it matters. We don’t plan long-term because if we do we’ll just get our hearts broken. It’s best not to hope. You just take what you can get as you spot it.

I am not asking for sympathy. I am just trying to explain, on a human level, how it is that people make what look from the outside like awful decisions. This is what our lives are like, and here are our defense mechanisms, and here is why we think differently. It’s certainly self-defeating, but it’s safer. That’s all. I hope it helps make sense of it.

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Numerous foreign ministers and news agencies confirm there is an accord in Geneva between six nations and Iran. This is an interim agreement for a temporary halt to Iran’s weapon or energy (depending on who you ask) program to lay the foundation for a broader agreement in six months. Accord will be signed at Palais des Nations. “President Barack Obama says a nuclear deal with Iran is an “important first step” toward addressing the world’s concerns over the Islamic republic’s disputed nuclear program. Obama says the deal includes “substantial limitations” on Iran and cuts off the Islamic republic’s most likely path to a bomb.”



The US House recently passed two bills that would demand a \$5,000 filing fee for any individual that wanted to hold an official protest of a drilling project, and that would give the feds less authority nationwide over hydraulic fracking rules. HR 1965, the Federal Lands Jobs and Energy Security Act, imposes a \$5,000 fee for anyone wishing to file for an official protest of a proposed drilling project. An amendment to the bill offered by Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) that would have clarified the fee to make sure it was not in violation of First Amendment rights was defeated. In addition, the bill would allow for automatic approval of onshore drilling permits should the US Department of Interior (DOI) take over 60 days to act on an application.

The law is finally catching up to the world’s largest retailer. In a rare move, the NLRB General Counsel announced that the board is pursuing a national complaint against Walmart for allegedly threatening and retaliating against more than 100 employees who engaged in protests, on-the-job actions or strikes for fair pay.



Vinyl records are making a comeback. These days, every major label and many smaller ones are releasing vinyl, and most major new releases have a vinyl version, leading to a spate of new pressing plants. A growing number of classic albums — including the complete Beatles and early Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan catalogs — have had vinyl reissues in recent years as well. about 25 million vinyl discs were pressed in the United States last year and around a dozen pressing plants have sprouted up in the United States, along with the few that survived from the first vinyl era, and they say business is so brisk that they are working to capacity.

According to the report, titled “Spooky Business,” a global network of former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National Security Agency (NSA) employees work at the beck and call of corporations like Walmart, Monsanto, Coca Cola, Burger King, McDonald’s, Kraft, Shell, BP and others, undermining consumer protections and enforcing a pro-business agenda. These espionage tactics are not limited to the United States. “Spooky Business” details surveillance and sabotage projects carried out in France, the U.K. and India by companies and organizations ranging from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to Dow Chemical to Bank of America. A press release on the website CorporatePolicy.org said that the companies have engaged in efforts to undermine groups of all kinds, including “environmental, anti-war, public interest, consumer, food safety, pesticide reform, nursing home reform, gun control, social justice, animal rights and arms control groups.”

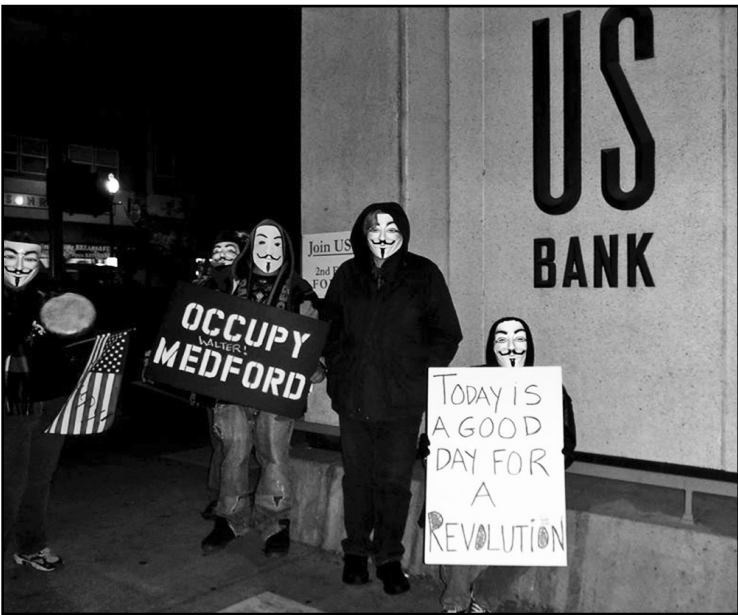
An offshoot of Occupy Wall Street has announced it has bought up and forgiven \$14.7 million worth of U.S. medical debt over the past year. The Occupy Wall Street’s Strike Debt group launched its “Rolling Jubilee” effort to buy distressed debt from financial firms, often for pennies on the dollar, and then cancel it so that borrowers do not have to repay. The group says it has spent more than \$400,000 to buy up medical debt and relieve some 2,600 patients of their financial burdens.

Marvel Comics is bringing Ms. Marvel back as a 16-year-old daughter of Pakistani immigrants living in Jersey City named Kamala Khan. The character - among the first to be a series protagonist who is both a woman and Muslim - is part of Marvel Entertainment’s efforts to reflect a growing diversity among its readers while keeping ahold of the contemporary relevance that have underlined its foundation since the creation of Spider-Man and the X-Men in the early 1960s. “Kamala is not unlike Peter Parker,” said Marvel Editor-In-Chief Axel Alonso of the teenager turned wall crawler. “She’s a 16-year-old girl from the suburbs who is trying to figure out who she is and trying to forge an identity when she suddenly bestows great power and learns the great responsibility that comes with it.”

FAIL: New Toys “R” Us Ad Disses Nature

Who needs nature when you have Toys “R” Us?! That’s basically the premise of the toy store’s latest commercial depicting a busload of disgruntled kids on a field trip to the forest. The bus and tour leader are disguised as “Meet the Trees Foundation” ambassadors, and the kids jump and rejoice only when they find out that the woodland trip is a ruse and they’re actually being taken to a Toys “R” Us store to play with the merchandise.

Remember, remember the 5th of November...



dozens of activists from Occupy Medford gather in solidarity of the Million Mask March ... Photo by Allen Hallmark

Abundance Swap offers alternative to holiday shopping

BY JASON HOUK



In the busyness of the holiday season, it’s important to remember that the Rogue Valley is rich in the spirit of giving. Nothing demonstrates this more than Ashland’s annual Abundance Swap. This community gathering, now in its twelfth year, celebrates bounty and offers an alternative to holiday shopping.

The idea behind the Abundance Swap is simple. People are encouraged to bring in previously loved, gift-worthy items to exchange with others in a spirit of giving. They share what they don’t need anymore so that others may use it.

“People like to give during the holidays,” said event host Jeff Golden. “This is a way to celebrate our community and the fact that we have so much. It’s an alternative to the massive, almost frantic consumption that takes place. The Abundance Swap offers the opportunity to focus our gift giving, not as an obligation but a practice, and it connects us to people and puts us in touch with our natural generosity.”

The event was the idea of local Buy Nothing Day organizers who wanted to challenge the holiday buying frenzy and offer something new for the community. Golden remembers the first Abundance Swap. “On a gray Sunday afternoon in December, a couple of adventurous friends and I opened the doors of the Oak Street Dance studio, loaded the CD player with holiday music, plugged in a crock pot full of apple cider and cinnamon

sticks, and set up the room for the First Annual Ashland Abundance Swap.” Since then, the event brought hundreds of Rogue Valley residents together to share in the spirit of giving. Inspired by the event’s success, other communities are copying the model. The Abundance Swap is on Sunday, December 8th at the Historic Ashland Armory. Doors open at 1:00 PM and the event begins at 1:30 PM. To participate, bring two to five quality items to be given as gifts. Children are encouraged to attend, although children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. All items not chosen will be donated to needy families. For more details, visit www.abundanceswap.org.

What’s on your mind?

The Rogue Valley Community Press welcomes your articles, letters, PSA’s, poems, artwork and events. Send your stories to editor@rvcommunitypress.com, or call the RVCP hotline at 541-622-9483.

Thank You!

Thank you to all of our supporters, subscribers, advertisers and friends.

Single Payer in Oregon

BY SUSAN DOHERTY

As a member of Health Care for All Oregon and a healthcare consumer, I have given a great deal of thought to the state of medical coverage in Oregon and nationwide. Currently, my husband and I have coverage through my husband's employer. Previously I had coverage through my employers where I first saw the transfer of more and more costs to the employee through higher premiums, deductibles, and co-payments. Our current policy includes a \$5,000 deductible that has to be met each year before the insurer begins to pay our healthcare costs. The high deductible was our only option for healthcare coverage to remain affordable.

As a former small business owner, insurance professional, and consumer I have experienced many aspects and consequences of the healthcare insurance industry. I have delayed healthcare checkups due to high deductibles, and I have been unable to hire employees due to the high cost of providing healthcare coverage. After research and discussions with other community members, I believe that a single payer plan would greatly enhance the lives of Oregon residents and businesses. My discussion in this article is to provide a brief definition of single payer healthcare coverage and the benefits it would provide to residents and businesses. As this is a complex issue, I hope to provide greater detail, a discussion of the pros and cons of single payer, proposed single payer financing options, and the misconceptions spread by the insurance industry, in future articles. Single payer has a markedly different financing system for healthcare costs. With single payer, a single government run entity would collect healthcare fees and pay healthcare costs. Currently, thousands of healthcare companies such as healthcare insurers, billing agencies, HMOs, etc. have a hand in our healthcare pie. By replacing these thousands



Health Care for All Oregon - Rogue Valley Choir

of entities, millions of dollars of administrative costs would be saved. Any healthcare provider in private practice can tell you the complexity of dealing with multiple insurance companies with varying coverages, forms and exclusions. Cost containment could be more easily attained through fee negotiation, bulk prescription drug and supply purchasing, budgeting and investment planning by one entity rather than thousands.

If the State of Oregon adopted a single payer plan, all Oregonians would receive comprehensive benefits including medically necessary and preventative services, medical supplies, and prescription drugs. Medical care would not be dependent upon the ability to pay and would be available to all regardless of economic and employment status. One entity would pay healthcare practitioners, hospitals and other providers for services rendered. The healthcare consumer would be relieved of the burdens of deductibles, co-pays, pre-existing condition restrictions and the ability to pay for healthcare insurance. Many would avoid bankruptcies due to healthcare bills and would enjoy a much greater life experience without having to worry about healthcare costs and coverage.

Coalitions of physicians, businesses, and consumers are advocating for the establishment of a single payer plan. In addition to the potential benefits to state residents, businesses in the State of Oregon could see the following benefits according to the Business Coalition for Single Payer Healthcare and other organizations:

Reduced labor costs estimated at 10-12%
Reduced workers compensation cost, likely by half
Lower liability and auto insurance costs.

Elimination of health benefits management costs and yearly insurance company and labor contract negotiations for healthcare.

Healthier workforce personnel, less employee loss and complaints due to employer health coverage.

More business capital available for expansion, product development and workforce growth.

More money would be available to the consumer due to lower healthcare costs which would expand the state and business economy.

Businesses could better reward employees and create greater job satisfaction resulting in less turnover.

The State of Oregon could attract more businesses due to lower healthcare costs. Whether you agree with me or not, it is important that all factions in Oregon engage in meaningful dialogue on healthcare. Individuals, businesses and state and local governments are collapsing under the burden of the current healthcare system. The Affordable Care Act and Cover Oregon do not address many of the most serious issues in the cost and delivery of healthcare coverage in Oregon and beyond. Oregon has always been an innovator in healthcare, and I believe that we have the will, the size and the knowledge to create true healthcare reform.

For more information on the Health Care for All Oregon campaign, visit www.hcao.org.

On the street

BY KAREN JEFFERY

Whereby our roving reporter takes timely questions to people on the street.

This week I stopped folks at Costco to ask: "What's your opinion about the Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare), and how has it affected your personal coverage?"

Craig Fox. IT with Motorcycle Superstore. Medford



I was employed recently, so I'm still on a 90-day waiting period. The cost of insurance might go up for employers, but if they value their people, they'll cover it. Those uncovered and unemployed will probably get better prices.

Dr Stephen Barnes. Optometrist. Jacksonville



There's no change in my family of four's policy yet, but I think it will go up. I'm certain it will go up. Maybe I'll check out other plans, but probably not. My wife handles it.

Amy McGillivray. Hair stylist. Grants Pass



My own family insurance plan is going up from \$140-\$315, with no noticeable changes in benefits. I haven't yet gone to the Cover Oregon site, but I will. And even if it costs me more, I'll feel good about others getting coverage.

Debora Poudreau. BLM, Klamath Falls



I'm waiting to see what will happen. It's open season November 11, and I've heard there will be a \$65 one-time fee. I expect rates to go up and coverage down. My son works for \$10 per hour, and this is beyond his ability to afford (I checked on the site). I've heard they'll fine him and attach his wages if he doesn't buy, and that would be terrible.

Steve Campbell. Sales Manager, Costco. Ashland



As a Costco employee, I expect no change to benefits or costs...and they're great now. I think that timing on major financial issues like this may not be good right now, and I have some apprehension about a national registry of citizens. But overall I don't expect changes to my own great healthcare because good employers will take care of their employees.

Karen Jeffery is a freelance writer, publicist, photographer, publicist, activist, and resource unlimited. Reach her at mauitutu@gmail.com.

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Health Care Live Studio Discussion

Health Care for All Oregon presents:

Town Hall Discussion on Health Care

**Friday, December 6th
6:30 PM - 7:30 PM**

Live at Rogue Valley TV Channel 15

Join us at the RVTV studio for a live discussion and presentation of:

The Health Care Movie.

Following the movie will be discussion and questions with members of Health Care for All Oregon.

Food stamp cuts hit hard — and harder still

BY JOANNE ZUHL
FOR STREETROOTS

Across Oregon, low-income families are adjusting to a little less, thanks to the national reduction in the food stamp program that went into effect Nov. 1.

We haven't seen the last of it. Lawmakers in Washington D.C. are currently threshing out two plans for the nutrition supplement program that's part of the 2013 Farm Bill, the host bill for the food stamp program administered through the Department of Agriculture.

The Senate is proposing a \$4.1 billion cut to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, over the next 10 years. Republicans in the House are more heavy-handed, calling for \$40 billion over the same period. The axe is expected to fall somewhere in between, on top of the unprecedented Nov. 1 cuts that signaled the expiration of the 2009 stimulus package.

"Maybe these people need to spend a month, two months, six months and live on the same budget we have to live on and see just how hard it is to make ends meet," says Joe Van Der Heiden, who has lived on food stamps for the past three years. Multiple physical and mental disabilities have prevented him from finding a job outside of selling Street Roots. The \$200 he received in food stamps comprised his entire food budget. "It's really hard to explain to somebody who hasn't done it. People take for granted that they get a monthly paycheck that can pay their bills and put food on their table and don't have to worry about whether it's nutritional enough, if it's filling, or how many meals they're going to get out of it."

On Nov. 1, Van Der Heiden's \$200 dropped to \$189. "I'm not going to be able to get as good nutritional food. I'm going to have to get filler," he says. "It's going to be eating a lot more

Hot Pockets. It's \$10 for a box of 12, but that's six meals."

The cut prompted a wave of frantic calls to the state's resource call center, 211Info, according to the center's Matt Kinshella. The call center receives more than 275,000 calls each year from people needing help with housing, food supplies, energy assistance and health care.

"People were confused about what their cut would be and upset because, for most of our callers, every dollar counts," Kinshella says. "Any cuts to one of Oregon's most vital safety net programs will have a significant impact."

Individual benefits vary according to each family's situation, but on average, a family of four with no other income, receiving \$668 in monthly SNAP benefits, lost \$36 a month in food assistance due to the expiration of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. With the cuts now in place, SNAP benefits pay \$1.40 per meal. At that figure, the \$36 amounted to more than a full week of meals.

In Oregon, about 800,000 individuals — one in five Oregonians — are on food stamps, totaling \$1.2 billion in assistance. As such, Oregon has one of the highest rates of food stamp use in the nation, but the economic landscape tells the larger story, according to Belit Burke, SNAP program manager with the Oregon Department of Human Services.

"The unemployment rate is coming down, but people aren't working full time," Burke says.

"They're making less money because they couldn't get back into the industry they came from. It's a combination of lower wages and less hours that are keeping people on the benefit."

Jeff Kleen, public policy advocate for the Oregon Food Bank, says the statewide network can't absorb the impact rolling out of these cuts. To cover the shortfall, the food bank would have to

increase its inventory by 30 percent, Kleen says, this, for an organization that already delivers more than a million emergency food boxes across Oregon.

As is, SNAP benefits fall far short of the demand for food, according to Kleen.

"We do biannual surveys of people who are accessing emergency food boxes across the state and we ask what brought them there. The number one reason is their SNAP benefits have run out," Kleen says.

The recent round of cuts are unprecedented for their sweeping reductions for all recipients. The bills being considered in the House and Senate conference committee would cut costs, in part, by changing eligibility requirements, which could mean that in addition to reductions in benefits, millions of poor families could be simply dropped from the program altogether.

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici voted with the minority against the \$40 billion package that emerged from the House. She disagrees with her fellow representatives that the local and faith communities can take up the slack from the cuts.

"They can't fill the need," says Bonamici. "A lot of people who benefit are children, they're seniors, they're veterans. To take food out of the mouths of children and seniors is wrong. It's the wrong place to be cutting."

Rep. Kurt Schrader, who is serving on the conference committee to reconcile the House and Senate versions, did not return our calls as of press time. Bonamici says even the \$4 billion reduction proposal from the Senate could be catastrophic for people needing the assistance.

"We have too much food insecurity in Oregon and across the country," she said. "We should not be cutting nutrition assistance."

In addition to families, the cuts to SNAP have a impact on the wider economy. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which manages the program, calculates that for every \$5 of SNAP benefits spent, there is \$9.20 of total economic activity.

And as a consequence, communities are bracing for higher demands on its own resources for low-income families as people begin to balance their trade-offs.

Local governments are under enormous pressure to respond to local need and have suffered through several rounds of budget cutting," says Liesl Wendt, who is serving as interim County Commissioner for the campaigning Deborah Kafoury. Wendt is on leave from her work with the state's self-sufficiency

Local food drive

Community members and local businesses are stepping up to help support neighbors and friends in need this holiday season. As community food banks are in critical need of donations, local businesses are making space for donation bins.



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- Action Radiator**
1209 S. Pacific Hwy., Talent
- Swing Tree Brewing**
200 E. Hersey St., Ashland
- Badenhop Speed Shop**
Corner of 3rd & B Street, Ashland
- A Street Print and Parcel**
258 A Street, Ashland
- Essential Elements**
300 E. Hersey #14, Ashland
- Southside Tattoo**
1762 Ashland St, Ashland
- Down Right Timber Falling**
14350 Hwy 66, Ashland
- Drop off non-perishable food donations at any of the above participating locations. For more information, call 541-821-0103.**
- Southern Oregon NAPA Locations:**
- Ashland**
1952 Ashland St.
- Phoenix**
4526 S. Pacific Hwy.
- Medford**
3755 Crater Lake Hwy.
- White City**
2465 Ave. A St.
- Shady Cove**
20735 Hwy 62
- Central Point**
357 S. Front St.

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Like the bite of a crab.
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With all those who haven't eaten.
Let us spread great tablecloths,
Put salt in the lakes of the world,
Set up planetary bakeries,
Tables with strawberries in the snow,
And a plate like the moon itself
From which we can all eat.

Now I ask no more
Than the justice of eating.

by Pablo Neruda



“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs, but not every man’s greed.”

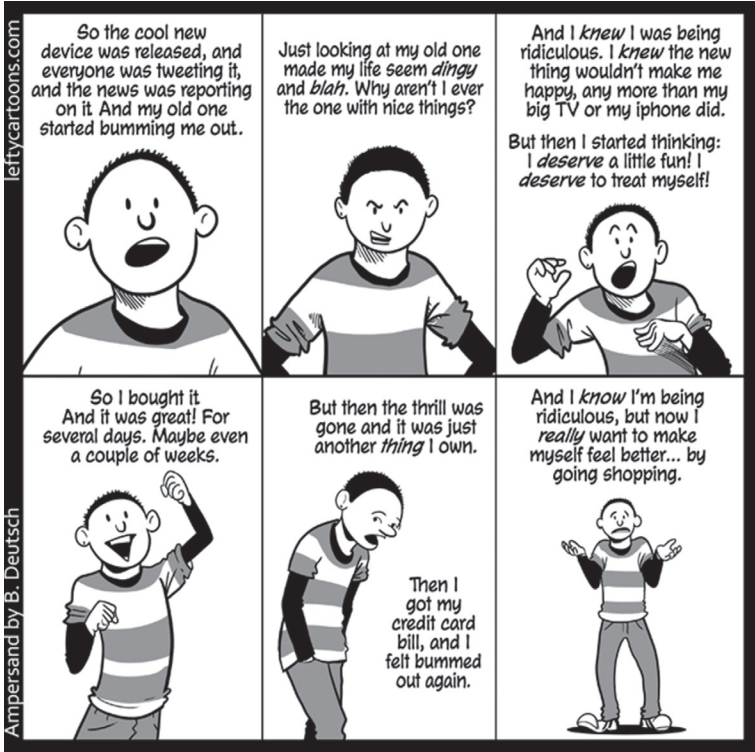
Mahatma Gandhi

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Secret trade policy threatens drug patents, copyrights

VIA WIKILEAKS

Earlier this month, WikiLeaks released the secret negotiated draft text for the entire TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) Intellectual Property Rights Chapter.

The TPP is the largest-ever economic treaty, encompassing nations representing more than 40 per cent of the world's GDP. The WikiLeaks release of the text comes ahead of the decisive TPP Chief Negotiators summit in Salt Lake City, Utah, on 19-24 November 2013. The chapter published by WikiLeaks is perhaps the most controversial chapter of the TPP due to its wide-ranging effects on medicines, publishers, internet services, civil liberties and biological patents. Significantly, the released text includes the negotiation positions and disagreements between all 12 prospective member states.

The TPP is the forerunner to the equally secret US-EU pact TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership), for which President Obama initiated US-EU negotiations in January 2013. Together, the TPP and TTIP will cover more than 60 per cent of global GDP. Both pacts exclude China. Since the beginning of the TPP negotiations, the process of drafting and negotiating the treaty's chapters has been shrouded in an unprecedented level of secrecy. Access to drafts of the TPP chapters is shielded from the general public. Members of the US Congress are only able to view selected portions of treaty-related documents in highly restrictive conditions and under strict supervision. It has been previously revealed that only three individuals in each TPP nation have access to the full text of the agreement, while 600 'trade advisers' – lobbyists guarding the interests of large US corporations such as Chevron, Halliburton, Monsanto and Walmart – are granted privileged access to crucial sections of the treaty text.

The TPP negotiations are currently at a critical stage. The Obama administration is preparing to fast-track the TPP treaty in a manner that will prevent the US Congress from discussing or amending any parts of the treaty. Numerous TPP heads of state and senior government figures, including President Obama, have declared their intention to sign and ratify the TPP before the end of 2013. WikiLeaks' Editor-in-Chief Julian Assange stated: "The US administration is aggressively pushing the TPP through the US legislative process on the sly." The advanced draft of the

Intellectual Property Rights Chapter, published by WikiLeaks on 13 November 2013, provides the public with the fullest opportunity so far to familiarise themselves with the details and implications of the TPP.

The 95-page, 30,000-word IP Chapter lays out provisions for instituting a far-reaching, transnational legal and enforcement regime, modifying or replacing existing laws in TPP member states. The Chapter's subsections include agreements relating to patents (who may produce goods or drugs), copyright (who may transmit information), trademarks (who may describe information or goods as authentic) and industrial design. The longest section of the Chapter – 'Enforcement' – is devoted to detailing new policing measures, with far-reaching implications for individual rights, civil liberties, publishers, internet service providers and internet privacy, as well as for the creative, intellectual, biological and environmental commons. Particular measures proposed include supranational litigation tribunals to which sovereign national courts are expected to defer, but which have no human rights safeguards. The TPP IP Chapter states that these courts can conduct hearings with secret evidence. The IP Chapter also replicates many of the surveillance and enforcement provisions from the shelved SOPA and ACTA treaties.

The consolidated text obtained by WikiLeaks contains annotations detailing each country's positions on the issues under negotiation. Julian Assange emphasises that a "cringingly obsequious" Australia is the nation most likely to support the hardline position of US negotiators against other countries, while states including Vietnam, Chile and Malaysia are more likely to be in opposition. Numerous key Pacific Rim and nearby nations have not been involved in the drafting of the treaty.

In the words of WikiLeaks' Editor-in-Chief Julian Assange, "If instituted, the TPP's IP regime would trample over individual rights and free expression, as well as ride roughshod over the intellectual and creative commons. If you read, write, publish, think, listen, dance, sing or invent; if you farm or consume food; if you're ill now or might one day be ill, the TPP has you in its crosshairs."

BUY NOTHING DAY: An alternative to Black Friday

VIA FRUGALING.ORG

This year, many retailers will be encroaching even further on family and friend time by opening at 6 PM on Thanksgiving. The early start is forcing people to rethink the concept of "Black Friday." Rather than recognizing what we are thankful for, helping others, and bringing people together, this holiday has been entirely co-opted by major businesses for gargantuan profits. Marketing campaigns of epic proportions convince us that now is the time to save – the

only time. The fact is Black Friday deals are temporary, and most if not all items will eventually hit these prices. These "steals" and "deals" are made up to capitalize on psychological vulnerability.

The Answer: Buy Nothing Day There's an alternative to mall trampling stories, waiting out in the cold, and losing our Thanksgiving dinners. It's time to start talking about Buy Nothing Day. Started by the protestors at Adbusters (credited with starting Occupy Wall Street), the holiday

from Black Friday tells us one thing: resist the urge and enjoy your friends, family, and what you already have.

This horrible holiday of consumerism only comes once a year. Try something different, and save your wallet the punishment of swiping away your savings accounts for "once-in-a-lifetime deals." Life is about more than a low price and your time with those you care about is truly priceless. There are only 30,000 days to make this special, and it doesn't start with a weekly ad.



NLRB Launches Prosecution Against Walmart for Violating Workers' Rights

VIA JOBS WITH JUSTICE

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the federal agency charged with protecting workers' rights to collective activity, has ruled that retail giant Wal-Mart has violated the rights of striking workers. In a statement, the NLRB said Wal-Mart "unlawfully threatened, disciplined, and/or terminated employees for having engaged in legally protected strikes and protests."

The NLRB is pursuing multiple charges against the company, alleging it illegally retaliated against 117 employees in stores across the country. The General Counsel's office plans to prosecute Walmart for violating the law by firing or disciplining those who engaged in legally-protected strikes. Additionally, the NLRB charges that Walmart violated the law by threatening workers that there will be consequences if they go on strike.

The incidents include last year's "Black Friday" protests which saw workers lead rallies at more than 1,000 Wal-Mart stores and another strike this past June. The NLRB says it will pursue charges, unless Wal-Mart can reach an agreement with their workers. The group OUR Walmart is organizing a new round of "Black Friday" protests next week.

The NLRB specifically charged that Walmart spokesperson David Tovar, when he appeared on national television in November 2012, illegally threatened associates with potential disciplinary action if they engaged in job actions on Black Friday. Walmart just promoted Tovar to VP of Corporate Communications.

Sarita Gupta, Executive Director of Jobs with Justice and American Rights at Work issued the following statement in response to the NLRB's decision:

"The Labor Board took a rare step today to pursue a nationwide complaint against Walmart. The Board's decision to prosecute confirms that the law is catching up to the company, and underscores what Walmart associates have long known: the company is illegally trying to silence employees who speak out for better jobs.

There are reports of Walmart's shelves going unstocked, board members resigning, and a massive public relations campaign to repair the company's image. But the chinks in Walmart's armour are mounting, and the message is clear: there's a real cost to low prices, and workers are paying the consequences.

"Americans believe that we have the responsibility – and the right – to speak out against corporate abuses of workers. Customers, clergy and

community members from across the country are standing with Walmart workers bravely calling for better jobs and a stronger economy for all of us. As the peak retail season approaches, we're proud to stand with the working people who are asking Walmart to do right by its employees."

For Walmart workers awaiting this NLRB decision for months, this is long-awaited vindication that they've been exercising their legally protected right to strike. However, the fact that it comes months after Walmart engaged in this retaliation points to the need for community allies to stand with Walmart workers who speak out. If the federal government can't be there the moment someone is unfairly fired for going on strike or standing up, then we need community leaders to stand with those brave workers. If Walmart feels enough public pressure, the company may decide to follow the law and respect their employees' right to collective action.



Medford School District accused of unfair labor practices

BY JASON HOUK

The Medford Education Association (MEA) has filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) against the Medford School District. According to the MEA, a complaint has been filed with the Oregon Employment Relations Board with evidence of the district’s alleged unlawful behavior. The MEA is accusing the district of failing to restore days and/or increase insurance coverage and salaries as agreed to after the district received more money from the state last May. According to the complaint filed, the two sides had agreed what to do if extra money became available in a memorandum of understanding they’ve been operating under during current contract negotiations. The MEA represents 599 teachers. They are currently in contract negotiations with

the district. The group is accusing the Medford School District of violating the law the communities trust because the district had signed an agreement promising to add back cut school days and restore concessions made by teachers to save the district money. So far, the MEA says that hasn’t happened. The MEA insists that the district should restore four days to the school calendar based on an increase in per-pupil funding the district received from the state for 2012-2013 over the previous year. The MEA is also claiming that a one-time payment of \$800,000 the district received should be applied toward employees’ insurance premiums and salaries. The district responded through its lawyers that it disagreed with the demands, saying there was no language in the memorandum that requires the

district to take those steps. The UFP further sours the contract negotiations that have now spanned eight months. Said one teacher at the October school board meeting, “There is obviously money in the district as administrators gave themselves a nice raise last year while we were still having to cut days.”

Do You have a story to tell about struggling to make it on poverty wages, bad working conditions, lack of paid sick days or affordable healthcare?

Let us know.

Send your stories to:
editor
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541-622-9483

City Prepares for landlord fight

JUSTIN BOURKE FOR KDRV

Medford Police say a local landlord is forcing tenants to go without heat, among many other things, and there’s nothing they can do to help. The home in question has been issued eight citations for everything from electrical wiring, to plumbing and sanitation, and lack of heat, but the landlord has simply ignored the violations. Medford Code Enforcement says the Central Point company, Real Property Group, and its owner, Kevin Curtin, have been receiving citations for a number of homes owned around the city, but this house is the worst. The laundry list of problems includes wobbly and leaky faucets, exposed wiring and electrical outlets, a broken furnace and air conditioning, and even a crumbling retaining wall in the back. Medford Police says legally, the issue is black and

white. “It’s pretty straightforward. I mean you have to provide basic requirements for a residence for someone to live in that house,” said Medford Police Sgt. Brent Mak. Code Enforcement says normally citations are resolved within 30 days. These citations were given in May. Now, Medford Police and Code Enforcement have legal authority to visit the home on a weekly basis and give more citations to the landlord, but they can’t do anything else until it reaches municipal court. Once that happens, the landlord can be fined, and if those fines get high enough, a lien can be placed on the property; however, that process takes a long time, forcing this family and perhaps others to endure a long and cold winter.

This Holiday Season Support Independent Media

Your donations support grassroots, community reporting, investigative journalism as well as public access to our media resources.

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We are also looking for help with writing, editing and distribution.

Please call 541-622-9483 and let us know you can help.

City Council session packed with bag ban supporters

BY ENVIRONMENT OREGON

On November 18, Ashland citizens and local businesses came together to call of the Ashland City Council to ban plastic bags. As City Councilors discussed the opportunity to ban plastic bags in Ashland, community members packed the room to capacity, so much so that extra chairs needed to be brought in from other meeting rooms. Community members were also joined by the “Bag Monster,” the mascot of Environment Oregon’s Keep Plastic Out of the Pacific campaign. The Monster consists of over 500 plastic bags—the average number a person uses in one year. “Oregonians use over 1.7 billion bags every year,” said Rikki Seguin, Conservation Advocate with Environment Oregon. “This is huge contributor to the plastic pollution in waterways, like the Rogue River, and eventually in our oceans. Plastic pollution is an environmental disaster, harming thousands of birds and marine animals every year.” Supported by numerous members of the community in the audience, the Ashland City Council moved forward in recommending that city staff begin drafting a bag ban ordinance for the Council to vote on in 2014. Other recommendations included rolling-out an educational

“Bring Your Own Bag” program to local businesses. Monday’s City Council study session came at the heels of a recent recommendation from the Ashland Conservation Commission. In late October, the Conservation Commission recommended that the city of Ashland proceed with efforts to draft an ordinance to ban plastic grocery bags. “Ashland is known across the state for its leadership in sustainability,” said Seguin, applauding Monday’s decision. “Passing a plastic bag ban will solidify Ashland as an environmental leader in the state.” Oregon has seen growing public support for bans on plastic bags, with three cities, Portland, Corvallis, and Eugene, having passed bans already. Ashland residents have been demonstrating their support of a ban, with over 500 citizen petitions and nearly 100 local businesses endorsements. “Ashland has the opportunity to live up to its legacy of sustainability and become the first city in Southern Oregon to ban plastic bags,” said Seguin. “By the number of community members in the room tonight, we saw just how much growing support there is here in Ashland when it comes to banning plastic bags.”

2013 Holiday Art Show

featuring art by the artists of the Studio at Living Opportunities.

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3D-printer generates liver

VIA PRESS RELEASE

A San Diego start-up company called Organovo has managed to use 3D printing to generate a liver that lasts for 40 days. The company is lighting the way for 3D printed organs and edible meat of the future after developing a slice of functioning liver by printing layers of liver cells. As the liver is an organ that naturally regenerates itself, it makes it perfect for this project and Organovo's latest printed liver was fully functioning for 40 days, which was a 700 percent increase on the company's previous effort last April which lasted five days. The 3D printed liver filters out toxins and drugs to keep in nutrients, but the company has yet to master the ability to integrate blood vessels using 3D printing, which is why this example dies after 40 days as these are what keeps a normal liver alive and healthy. Organovo's 3D printed liver can be made using a patients own stem cells, so that it will not get rejected upon implant. The company is hoping to deliver slices of liver in the 3D Human Liver Project next year, which aims to offer a means of testing drugs on human tissue without the risk of harming humans.

Volunteers Needed:

Uncle Foods Diner at the Methodist Church, Ashland. Tuesdays, 3-6:30pm. Cooks, servers, clean up needed. Contact Ruth at info@peacehouse.net

Hacktivist Jeremy Hammond sentenced to 10 years, claims FBI directed attacks

The computer hacker Jeremy Hammond has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for hacking into the computers of the private intelligence firm Stratfor. Hammond has admitted to being a member of the group Anonymous and to stealing files from Stratfor, as well as other government and corporate sites. Some five million Stratfor emails ended up on the whistleblowing website WikiLeaks, showing how the firm monitors activists and spies for corporate clients. Hammond pleaded guilty earlier this year in part to avoid a longer sentence of at least 30 years in prison. He has already spent

Deserts

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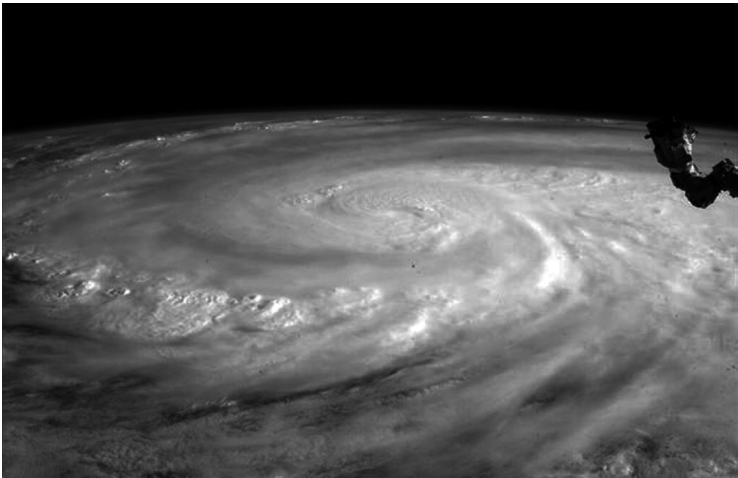
residents will have to travel North or South to find large grocery stores. "They're the hub here in Phoenix at this point in time for the main grocery outlet. You don't have anything out here" explains John Williams, manager at Angelo's Pizza. "Out in this end of the valley, there's not that much out here" said Phoenix resident Wayne Stone. "I shop here quite a lot. This is a very nice market. We'd really miss this, that's for sure." To solve the problem of food insecurity, the solutions must go beyond the idea of simply building more grocery stores, as both rural and urban food desert areas have a hard time attracting and keeping commercial grocery retailers. According to the Center for Rural Affairs, in rural areas one in five grocery stores has gone out of business in the last four years. Local efforts have begun to encourage local convenience stores to stock fresh fruit and vegetables on their shelves but with poor results. On the other hand, our Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters Markets are growing and spreading. The key to success seems to be to sell produce at an affordable price, and accept EBT (food stamps), making access to healthy fruits and vegetables as convenient as possible. More resources should be provided for community gardens and to support community efforts. Follow the example of People's Community Market where folks sold stock directly to the public in order to fund a full-service neighborhood food store as well as a health resource center and community hub for West Oakland residents. or Fare and Square in Chester, Pa., a non-profit grocery store that is funded by grants from government, corporations and other donors.

18 months behind bars, some of it in solitary confinement. Hammond attorney Sarah Kunstler said Hammond's sentencing judge had overlooked his political motivations. Hammond's 10-year sentence is one of the longest ever in a criminal hacking case. During his sentencing, Hammond said an FBI informant had directed him to hack into the websites of several foreign governments, including Brazil, Iran and Turkey. According to Hammond, the FBI used him and other hackers to disrupt vulnerabilities in the home pages of foreign states.

Inside Typhoon Haiyan and a year of weird weather

BY JOEL LISONBEE AND TODD SMITH FOR INSP

Even before Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines with such devastating force, weather watchers around the world had been tracking this year's typhoon season with intense interest. Typhoon Haiyan has been seen as significant among meteorologists for several reasons - particularly because it has been part of such a strange season. The 2013 tropical cyclone season in the Northwest Pacific started quite slowly and gradually accelerated, eventually setting a few records. From January to September this year, we saw 23 tropical cyclones form in the Northwest Pacific. Those cyclones involve low pressure systems forming over warm tropical waters, with sustained gale force winds of 63 km/h or more. Yet during that same time in the Northwest Pacific, we only saw five typhoons with sustained winds of more than 118 km/h, when in an average season we would have seen around 12 typhoons by the end of September. But then last month, the tropical cyclone activity accelerated, particularly when it came to the strength or intensity of the storms. Seven typhoons formed in the Northwest Pacific in October; a new record for the month. And then came the November impact of Haiyan, which has been a sobering exclamation mark at what is typically the end of the season. The rise and deadly fall of a super typhoon Haiyan was the eighth typhoon to form in the Northwest Pacific since the start of October this year. It formed near 6°N on 3 November, possibly in association with an Equatorial Rossby wave — a westward moving atmospheric wave near the equator that can trigger convergence in the lower levels of the atmosphere. On November 4, Haiyan first reached tropical cyclone strength, defined as winds greater than 63 km/h, and then it continued to strengthen. As a typhoon, the winds around Haiyan reached a maximum sustained wind strength of 232 km/h on November 7. To date, Typhoon Haiyan is the strongest storm of the 2013 season and among the strongest on record for the Northwest Pacific. Because the system made landfall in a highly populated and vulnerable part of the world coinciding with its peak intensity, its impact was devastating for the



Typhoon Haiyan as seen from space on November 9 by NASA astronaut Karen L. Nyberg. <http://twitter.com/AstroKaren>

communities it hit. The coincident peak wind speeds occurring at landfall also helped produce a significant storm surge, a phenomenon that leads to higher than normal tides and waves along coastal areas. Storm surges are the single biggest threat to life in coastal areas from these events. Haiyan is likely to have produced a storm surge of around 5 to 6 metres above the normal tide level, causing significant damage and loss of life along the coastal fringe of affected areas. When the slightly less intense 1970 Bhola cyclone hit Bangladesh, up to 500,000 people died, mainly because of the associated storm surge. When Severe Tropical Cyclone Monica hit western Arnhem Land in 2006 with a similar intensity and storm surge to Haiyan, there were fortunately no fatalities because the point of landfall was sparsely populated. Analysis after the event will no doubt refine estimates of Typhoon Haiyan's maximum

wind speed, storm surge, and other vital statistics. But there's no doubting it will be assessed as one of the worst tropical cyclones at landfall in recorded history. It is a strong reminder to us all that continued improvements in forecasting accuracy, warning response, and community resilience will help save lives on the ground.

Poetry

Waiting for the moon
by Vanessa Houk

When your life is ruled
by the sight of the moon
and clouds creep in
fueled by rain
and wind and wintery madness
nights can seem long.

But the air is nice and cool
and we have this night
and that is a lot, really.

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3D printing umbilical cord clamps in Haiti

BY ASHLEY DARA - ILAB

At first glance, Haiti might seem an odd destination for a 3D printer. 3D printers are cutting edge. They're in the news. They're printing amazing things, from custom prosthetics, to fully functional engines, to buildings. They print forms that would be impossible to manufacture otherwise. And they're a fairly accessible toy for the DIYer to use at home. Haiti is a beautiful country fighting to improve itself and its global standing. The forces it fights against are powerful, varied, and very deep-rooted in its history. It lacks infrastructure that many countries take for granted: clean running water, electricity, sewage treatment, waste disposal, shipping, and others. Our organization, iLab // Haiti has brought the first two 3D printers to the country of Haiti. We have partnered with KIDmob to teach critical thinking, creative problem solving, adaptability, and communication along with the technical skills of rapid prototyping.

We are using two of MakerBot's dual extrusion Replicator 1 s, and we will add two more at the end of this month. We're teaching them to 3D model using SketchUp and Rhino, with the hope of teaching Autodesk's Inventor. Our goal is to empower local Haitians to think differently about their surroundings and potential. Some of their first projects are simple medical devices, such as umbilical cord clamps, which they are currently prototyping (on their fourth iteration). These medical devices would be 3D printed for direct use in local clinics with on-demand manufacturing. Hyper-local manufacturing will bypass inefficient and corrupt import systems that are currently the only option available. With rapid prototyping tools and internet capabilities, complex 3D models can be exchanged between Haiti and other countries for production, distribution, and direct connection to the global market. 3D printers in Haiti! What will they think of next? 3D printing in space?!

Did you know 90% of the earth population has brown eyes?

Brown eyes are predominant in humans and in many populations it is the only iris color. More than half the world's population has brown eyes and 90% of the world has brown, hazel or amber eyes which are all variants of brown eyes. Dark brown eyes are prominent in East Asia and contain large amounts of melanin within the iris. Blue eyes have become increasingly rare in American children in just the last few decades. As blue eyes are recessive, it needed parents of English, Irish and North

European descent to pass on these traits. Increasingly, immigration has brought a wider pool of genes which are more dominant, with the resulting decline in blue eyes. Thirty years ago about 30% of American babies had blue eyes; now that statistic has changed to 1 in 6. Researchers believe that all blue eyed people share one common ancestor. It is believed that the mutation that caused blue eyes occurred sometime between 6,000-10,000 years ago. Isn't it strange to think that all blue eyed people are somehow related?

Tracking

CONTINUED FROM 1

databases that document the private and sometimes intimate details of the lives of innocent individuals. The ACLU lists four areas in which indiscriminate collection of private data can affect our civil liberties: Chilling effect. ALPRs don't just take one picture. The take many thousands of pictures. To the extend that cruisers patrol the same areas, the movements of individuals living in that area are documented in extensive detail. That in turn can make people think twice about frequenting certain places. Abusive tracking. Anyone with access to the system can track their spouse, rivals, enemies, etc. Institutional abuse. The long history of law enforcement agencies engaging in illegal surveillance (ConintelPro) should caution us. It is only a small step to use accumulated license plate data for similar purposes. Discriminatory tracking. Police can decided to use APLRs only in certain parts of a city, thus capturing data based on race, ethnicity or faith. To curtail these potential abuses, the ACLU proposes the adoption of the following principles: Police may only access stored license plate data when there is a reasonable suspicion that a crime has occurred. Data about innocent persons must not be stored for any lengthy period. Data should only be preserved if it is clearly related to a crime or when preservation is requested the owner of the vehicle or for criminal defense purposes. Access to stored license plate data must be controlled. Only properly trained personnel must have access to the system. People should be able to find out if their plate has been stored. Data should not be shared with agencies that don't adhere to the same principles. Hot lists of wanted cars should be updates at least once per shift. How do the Medford PD practices compare to this list?

The Medford PD acquired its first ALPR in 2011 since then two more mobile units have been added. A trailer-based unit has since been decommissioned. The use of the readers is governed by rules laid out in its policy manual.4 The primary purpose is to identify stolen or wanted vehicles, plates and missing persons. Further uses include among other homeland security and electronic surveillance. The operative sentence in the manual speaks volumes: "An APLR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or official department investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause are not required before using an APLR." Such broad language does not conform with the ACLU principles. A police car on a normal patrol can collect any and all plates its camera captures. Your license plate is subject to collection and storage in the absence of any suspicion that you have been involved in criminal activity. The Medford PD fares better when it comes to data retention. According to Lt. Scott Clauson, head of the administrative support unit, the department retains plate data for ninety days. Compared to some PDs, that's rather short. Jersey City, NJ, for example retains data for five years. And several departments around the country never delete their data. On the other hand, the Minnesota State Police retains ALPR data only for forty-eight hours. But in the overall context, ninety days is pretty short. Access to the database also conforms to the ACLU's principles. Only trained personnel is permitted to use the system. Access is logged by time, day and login, so it is possible to review who accessed the system and when they did so. Wouldn't you want to know if a vehicle licensed to you is in the Medford database? Well, you're out of luck. The policy states that the data and images gathered are not subject to public review. When it comes to sharing with third parties, the Medford policy on ALPRs is rather vague. Information stored in the system "may be used and

shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law." There is no mention of any limits to sharing based on the recipient's policy regarding data retention and access control. While the Medford PD may adhere to a ninety day limit and monitor access to the database, a recipient agency may not. Fortunately, this hasn't become reality yet in the Rogue Valley. According to Lt. Scott Clauson, the Medford system is not connected to any other system. Apparently, there are software issues that have prevented such sharing with other police departments or regional fusion centers. But sharing is possible and future software updates may enable such features. Overall, the Medford PD ends up with a mixed report card. It does better than many other departments when it comes to data retention. The ninety day period doesn't really permit the creation of a vast database of individual movements. Its access control is also laudable. Being able to track every access goes a long way to preventing abuse. The department doesn't do so well when it comes to clearly and narrowly defining the use of APLRs. It is possible, under the departments policy, to track plates of vehicles that congregate at a particular place of worship, say a mosque, or venue where activists might meet. That is not to say the department plans on doing so. Lt. Clauson was adamant that he and his colleagues are very sensitive to privacy concerns and diligent about safeguarding the information stored on their servers. But the possibility is there. One way to prevent abuses is to implement the final recommendation of the ACLU. Any agency that uses license plate readers should be required to report its usage publicly at least once a year. It would behoove the Medford PD to issue such a report, if only to reassure us that its use of new technology fights crime rather than surveils innocent people. This report is a co-production with KSKQ Community Radio. You can listen to it here: <https://tinyurl.com/pcxsrua>

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Why Move to Amend the Constitution?

BY DAVID HYDE
MTA, JACKSON COUNTY

Move to Amend was created as a direct result of the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v Federal Elections Commission. Most people realize that all corporations, including foreign corporations can secretly funnel unlimited money to politicians through non-profit groups, but the corporations power is much more far reaching than this. Much of this power has been developing behind closed doors, for over the last forty years with the creation of ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) by our largest corporations. The intent was to have the best corporate lawyers write "boiler plate" legislation beneficial to the members. They hold conventions in popular cities, where they invite State and Federal politicians to join them. If the politician, who are also lobbied by these same corporations, sees a boiler plate bill he thinks he/she can get passed, he can take it home and present it as his own bill. You can see evidence of this

in legislation in almost every state, on issues like gun laws and diminished voter rights. During an ALEC dinner in New Orleans, a politician got so excited that he stood up and gave a football analogy: "It's as if ALEC is the coach and we are the football team." It is interesting to note that Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas and his wife were guest speakers at an ALEC conference in Palm Springs. Besides the obvious problem with corporations having the ability to corrupt our democracy by buying elections, the st Amendment allows corporations to promote dangerous products over the objection of communities. They use the 4th Amendment to avoid subpoenas for unlawful trade and price fixing, to prevent the stopping of pollution and other assaults on the people and the environment. Under the 5th Amendment, corporations must be compensated for property value lost (e.g. possible future profits). Under the 14th Amendment corporations are given Due Process and

Equal Protection, as do other people. The rights originally enacted to free the slaves from oppression have now been extended to the corporations. They have used these powers to exert their new rights over the interests of our communities, opposing taxation and public policies favoring local business. They also resist efforts to prevent corporate mergers and revoke corporate charters. Our problem really started long before the most recent Court rulings. In 1895 in the "Santa Clara v Southern Pacific Railroad" decision, the clerk of the court, in his summary, said corporations have the rights of the people. The judge never said that, but it has been used as a precedent in many future decisions moving even closer to the Citizens United decision on January 22, 2010 overturning laws in 24 states restricting corporate spending on political campaigns. Move to Amend is a truly "grass root" organization. We hold to the principle that "corporations are not people" and "money is not speech". Many other public interest

groups feel that all we need to do is reverse the Court's decision that corporations are people. This will make matters just as bad as they were before the decision. If we are going to have a chance at true democracy, we need corporations out of politics altogether. Corporations were originally created, like other institutions, and given the privilege to work on behalf of the people. A privilege is like a driver's license that we continue to keep as long as we obey the rules of the road. Many of the large corporations, rather than obey the law, just go to court and change the law. LET'S CREATE A NEW DEMOCRACY.

Move to Amend Jackson County is a trans partisan coalition of concerned citizens committed to an amendment to the U.S. constitution that states unequivocally that inalienable rights belong to human beings only and that money is not a form of protected free speech.

For more information, visit movetoamendjacksoncounty.org



PHOTO CREDIT:
ANGELO LOPEZ

Cuts

CONTINUED FROM 6

programs at the Department of Human Services, and she is also a former policy advocate for the Oregon Food Bank. "Throughout the county, there are large pockets of people who are hurting and trying to rebuild their lives following the economic downturn. Having additional cuts during this time negatively impacts the entire community and hurts both people in need and local businesses at precisely the time local government is starting to recover."

As for allegations of fraud in the program, which the proponents of major cuts have pushed forward, Burke says it's very rare. In fact, she says, despite the high numbers or recipients drawing the attention, the stigma attached to food stamps actually keeps some qualified people away. "These are our friends and neighbors. They are people that we know. They're ashamed of being on the program," Burke says. "They're the biggest critics. Nobody wants to come in and apply for government help. The biggest population that we hurt when this kind of stuff happens is the elderly. They don't want to be associated with stigma. A lot of people who need benefits won't get benefits."

Retrenchment and privatization at Southern Oregon University, and everywhere else...

BY WES BRAIN

Privatization of Public Services is a topic that is not new. Seeing it in our own backyard isn't new either. Privatization is a determined and deliberate plan which first started getting traction with Barry Goldwater many years ago. What I am talking about for the long term, is the plan to shrink government and make it small enough to drown it in a bathtub. This is a philosophical campaign which is becoming more and more successful. Its roots come from the belief that a free market will operate for the good of people and that free market capitalism will be good for the masses in the end.

If that sounds too philosophically complicated and maybe a little hard to get your head around then you are like everybody else. Making it complicated and keeping the masses confused is an important concept that greases the skids for privatization. Retrenchment leads to privatization leads to corporate control of our very democracy. Example A is this radio show host who was retrenched back in '07 and it literally came from nowhere. Ten minutes back to work after celebrating my 55th Birthday I was told I was being retrenched which means, "you are fired, there is

the door, don't let it hit you in the back-side on the way out, leave now!" My occupational health and safety services, kind of like being an internal OSHA inspector, were put on hold at SOU. You see, retrenchment can seriously stop vital and necessary services, even bringing to question SOU's commitment to preventing accidents and illnesses for university employees. Unfortunately in my case concern for the very safety of SOU workers went out the door when they retrenched me. Oregon OSHA ended up citing Southern Oregon University after my dismissal because of serious violations threatening campus

employees. I have proof of this. But don't just take my word for it when it comes to understanding retrenchment and privatization. On KSKQ's Brain Labor Report, the guests say it in their own words. hear from former SOU employee Lisa Melinger who was retrenched twice and then from Kevin Sahr currently a professor with the Computer Science Department. Listen to the show at: <http://alturl.com/t4n7x> The Brain Labor Report is Southern Oregon's labor radio program. Wednesdays 9-10 am exclusively on KSKQ 89.5 FM in Ashland.



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– Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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National day of action against low pay

Across the country, communities are standing up against low wage jobs and policies that fail to protect working families. On December 5 at 12:00 PM, community groups and labor supporters will unite to support low wage workers and fight

for a \$15 wage. Everyone will have a chance to be a part of the action by participating in peaceful lunchtime protests to demonstrate the united power of workers and communities. The event is organized locally by Rogue Valley Oregon Action.

National Day Against Low Pay:
December 5th
12:00am until 1:00pm

Medford at Riverside and Barnett

Ashland at Wendy's on Ashland St.

WILPF Holiday Gathering

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Holiday Gathering Friday, December 6 There will be tea and refreshments, and a warm welcome to all--members and visitors alike. WILPF a community of women working together towards a common goal of peace and justice. We collaborate with other groups with similar interests around the Rogue Valley, and sponsor educational events and films. Through email list and monthly meetings, WILPF keep their

membership informed of upcoming events, urgent actions, and alternative sources of information. Founded in 1915, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is one of the world's oldest continuously-active peace organizations. WILPF has international offices in Geneva and branches in 37 countries. For more information, call Mary Ann Jones, 541-482-8915.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Holiday Gathering

Fri, December 6,
1pm - 3pm

Ashland Library,
410 Siskiyou Blvd.

Oregon Action holiday party fundraiser

The community is invited to Oregon Action's 5th Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser. Celebrate the holiday, honor incredible activists and moving forward for 2014 Oregon Action is a statewide non-profit community justice organization dedicated to building power for moderate income progressives on issues of racial, economic and social justice. Oregon Action works to build concrete and

lasting political power among oppressed, disenfranchised and disadvantaged people in order to address the underlying causes of the problems that our members and constituents face in their day to day lives such as healthcare, police accountability, financial equity and housing. Special Guests include Ellen Pinney, Health Care Activist & States first ombudsperson for the Oregon Health Authority Activist awards will go

to Rogue Climate, Lourdes Anguiano - Oregon Action volunteer of the year and Allen Hallmark, lifetime activist

Oregon Action's Fifth Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser
Saturday, December 7
Talent Community Center
Talent, Oregon 97540
1:00pm until 3:00pm

Reservations: call 541-772-4029
virginia@oregonaction.org

Meeting

Happy Hour Peace Talks at Tabu Restaurant

Join us for presentation, discussion, and happy hour food and drink Monday, Dec.16th, 5 to 6 p.m. Tabu Restaurant, 76 N. Pioneer St., Ashland, Oregon Happy Hour Peace Talks presents speaker Wolf Hoppe "Voting Rights Act - Worst Decision of 2013 Supreme Court" The Supreme Court case, Shelby v Holder involved the question of the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The 5 Justice majority in the case determined that an important provision in the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional, making the most important feature of the act inoperable thus freeing states with a history of violating minority voting rights from the very successful strictures imposed on them in the past to prevent voting rights violations. Sponsored by Peace House. Join every third Monday of the month for "Happy Hour Peace Talk" for info and discussion on critical issues affecting community, state, nation, and the world.

Event

Appreciating and protecting our outdoor museums

The unique cultural imprint left by the region's pioneer cemeteries will be the focus of an upcoming Windows in Time talk titled "Appreciating and Protecting Our Outdoor Museums," to be given by Dirk J. Siedlecki on Wednesday, December 4, at the Medford Branch Library, 205 South Central Avenue, and Wednesday, December 11, at the Ashland Branch Library, 410 Siskiyou Boulevard. "The way people look at death and dying is inevitably a corollary of the way they look at life," historian David Stannard has noted, and Jackson County's many pioneer cemeteries wonderfully reflect this imprint. Members of all ages, professions, and classes are buried in what have become the meditation gardens on the Old West. Siedlecki offers a look at and understanding of what our historic cemeteries offer to visitors and the communities that they serve, and why they need to be protected and preserved for future generations. For more information please visit www.jcls.org.



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